Interview with Margaret (Peggy) Morgan

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Program
Foreign Service Spouse Series

MARGARET (PEGGY) MORGAN

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Initial Interview Date: September 2, 1986

MORGAN: ...I was going to college and had to come back here and testify in a senate hearing to represent university students.

Q: Can you tell me where you went to school?

MORGAN: At the University of Arizona in Tucson. I was very eager to become a Foreign Service officer. This was an ambition that was very deep. I knew somebody in the State Department through friends, went to see them, and apparently I was an object of amusement because I met various rather important gentlemen. I even met the Secretary of State, who told me very sweetly with the kind of benevolent gentleness that the only way I'd ever get into the Foreign Service was to marry into it. And twenty-one years later I did, quite strangely. There was a real feeling that this was a field in which women had neither the competence nor stamina to face all the problems that were involved. I was told again very gently that a woman's place was in the home, that a woman's job was to raise children, and therefore your attentions would always be divided and you would be incapable of using your intellectual abilities such as they might be to cope with foreign policy problems. I was somewhat discouraged.

I began working through student body governments to agitate, really literally agitate, for international relations courses at universities. We did a survey at that point of about fifteen universities west of the Mississippi River. In some states there were no courses in international relations and there was no foreign language requirement to graduate. Any person who wanted to go into the Foreign Service was, according to the rules of that day, pretty much cut off from the possibility, for their college education didn't give them all that's necessary. We did manage to get some, I saw rectors and presidents of universities learning how they were operated. Talked to student body government people, unless they weren't very convinced about me, and did gradually manage to get some interest.

When I came east in 1935, I talked to various foundation people. I was just a terribly innocent abroad. These things were important. I went to the Carnegie Foundation and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace to see if they couldn't put some money into two things. One, to get the general public educated to the idea that foreign affairs were important and that every citizen should know something about what was going on. And that on the other hand to be sure that young people were being given training that would make it possible for them to take examinations, that would make it possible for them to enter the Foreign Service. We made some real dents over a period of three or four years.

Q: Did Carnegie pick this up?

MORGAN: Well, they were very helpful putting me in touch with various people. I had to earn my living of course, and I had planned to go to Law School at Columbia, I had already done a year of law at Arizona, but Columbia didn't want to have any women in the Law School unless, well, one or two got in because they had terribly good connections. I was connectionless as far as Columbia Law School was concerned so that was out.

Instead I went over to meet one of the great men I've met in my life, Philip Jessup, who was then professor of international law. He said, “I will let you take my course. It's not part of our school, I will let you take it.” I said, “Thank you very, very much.” So I did take his

course but I couldn't go on because I got terribly involved helping refugees. I was director of education of International House in New York. All of the students were and still are deeply involved in trying to get fellowships for students and training programs for students.

My first job paid fifteen cents an hour and on fifteen cents an hour working six hours a day I didn't earn a dollar and on that I had to provide myself with food and money for books and things. I wasn't feeling sorry for myself, of course I was privileged. I had a job compared to many youngsters who had nothing. This is why I came back to Washington in the first place, to see whether we couldn't give support to the idea something like the National Youth Administration.

Q: At what point in time are we now?

MORGAN: Nineteen thirty-two, thirty-three. Spring of '33 there was some interest around the country. I had been elected president of the western student governments for women, so it was my job to see how many women we could keep in college, or help to finish. Women were the first to have to drop out. In a family if it was a choice between a son and a daughter, almost inevitably it was a daughter.

Q: This of course is the great Depression.

MORGAN: It reached the West with its greatest impact in 1933-34. Whereas here in the East it was already in full swing in 1931-32. The result was a great many people did have to drop out. Finally when the National Youth Administration was hatched by the Congress and effectively built up, some parts of it became rather political, which again was not our hope because we wanted to keep it nonpolitical and give everybody an equal chance regardless of sex or color or religion or whatever. It was a very busy decade with a great many tragedies, many of which could have been avoided if we'd looked forward and trained our young people. What we did was send them all off to war. That provides a certain training, but not very much.

Q: Not the most desirable one, I don't think. Was it actually the wartime experience that brought you to [the] State [Department]?

MORGAN: In a funny way. I was run over by an automobile and one of my feet had gotten rather badly smashed. I couldn't walk very well and I tried to join the Women's Army Corps and thought I'd made it until they asked me to jump up and down and that was my Waterloo because my foot just gave way and I went pitching on my face and they said so sorry. That went on my record, “denied entry”, so when I tried something else there was always this big black blot on the record.

During the war I got very involved in working on three different things. I helped set up something called the Post War Information Clearing House to see if we could bring focus into the studies that were being made by research institutions, universities, private organizations and so on, on a whole series of problems. Housing for people coming back, family housing. Education for people who had been in the war whose education had been deferred or changed because of the war. Programs for rehabilitating the working woman who had been a, whatever she happened to be doing, but she really had been doing a man's job. Rosie the Riveter. The problem was almost all of the companies we'd talked with were going to ditch the women for the men. They'd promised the men their jobs back. What did these women do? Some of them had to support children and families and this the companies hadn't taken into account, so they threw a law restriction at you.

The results of the research, I was working with NBC doing a thirty-one week series of broadcasts discussing the problems which we had formulated, in some instances we had made recommendations, but discussing them through the mouths of the men who were in a policy making position. Once I was down here from New York, I'd work all week in New York and then come down on the Friday night stand-up in the train. It got here at six-o-clock Saturday in the morning. Wash and brush-up at Union Station which used to permit that sort of thing. Then go to work down here getting ready for the program which we went

on air usually at seven to seven-thirty, but there's an awful lot before you get on the air and it was all my job.

This night I had Dean Acheson, who was then Under Secretary of the Treasury or State and the Secretary of the Treasury who later became Chief Justice, Mr. Vinson. I had them on the air. Well, there was no need to prompt them, they had lots to say, so I left both of them in the studio while I rushed over to the State Department at the request of John Dickey. I didn't know for what but he had called and said it was very urgent for me to come over if I possibly could. I said I'd be there at five-thirty but I could only stay forty-eight minutes because I've got to get back to get the show on the air. I came over and there was a circle of people waiting for me and they began questioning me on what the State Department could do to get thinking going on foreign policy problems we needed to solve. Of course this is what I had been doing on domestic problems, and some foreign policy problems too. I produced a variety of ideas, most of them probably not at all suitable in the circumstance, but it was a little bit like a shotgun wedding.

I had to rush back to my business, as I was going out somebody thrust a whole pile of paper in my hand and said, “so we know the kind of people we're looking for to do this job, will you fill out these papers and send them to us?” Sure, sure, I was in a rush and didn't have time to go into it, but on that night's long journey up to New York, the Pennsylvania Railroad was marvelous during the war but the one thing it didn't have was a roll bed that permitted any peace of mind or sleep, so I usually worked both ways. I had a seat this time. I pulled out these papers and filled them out. I sent them back with a little note by the way saying I did this rather hastily as you see the writing wasn't very good and sent them back to Washington and went merrily on with next week's program.

Six weeks later I got a phone call saying, my name was Carter, “Mrs. Carter, your office is waiting for you.” I said, “My what?” “This is the State Department Office of Personnel and everything is all arranged and we'd like you to start on Monday.” I asked what they wanted me to do. They said they had processed my papers and they had a secretary and office

space and everything in what is now the Executive Office Building. Could I report for duty on Monday?

I said “Good heavens, no. There was this really quite important, for us, radio series and I had commitments on finishing a book and doing a program on post-war planning in the United States with study groups all over the country, I can't just drop things. How did you get my name?”

And they told me what had happened. Those papers had just been processed. The more I thought about it the more exciting it was, because I was also coming down every other weekend for work, one of those dollar-a-year basis, to work with UNRRA [United Nations Refugee and Relief Agency] on problems on recruiting young people for participation in UNRRA programs, but more particularly, also training them because this was very important. You just don't go in and say I'm here to give relief, you have to know enough.

So for almost a year I was busy finishing all of these things and then I got a phone call from Washington saying you would have to report for duty by May 1, because the money will vanish and the office will go and you won't have the secretary and so on and we'd like very much to have you come. And I said I will talk to the boss and call you back. I went to the boss and said, “Look, I work like a dog seven days a week, twenty hours a day very often and my brain isn't fresh for this sort of thing any longer. Here's an opportunity to do something. I've tried to get into the Foreign Service; they wouldn't take me. Here's a chance to do something I really care about in the State Department, which is help the public know something about foreign affairs.” So that's how I got to work. It's a long story. It's fascinating because everything built on everything else. And everything I'd ever done came into play in the job I had in the State Department. I came in first to work in the division of public liaison as assistant chief of the division for media relations which meant working with TV which was just beginning doing experimental programs in New York. How you could get ideas using TV. It was really innocents abroad.

I did that for awhile, and then my wonderful boss, Francis Russell, who was chief of the division, in a reorganization was made director of the Office of Public Affairs, and asked me if I'd like to be chief of division, because he was making me acting chief. And so I was acting chief for almost six months and I got tired of that because I couldn't make decisions that were authoritative. If you were hiring somebody and building a staff, you have to say yes, I want this particular team under these circumstances, but I didn't know what I was doing it for. If it was for somebody else they might want to emphasize something different you see.

So I got my administrative officer, a wonderful woman, to find out what was happening, and it turned out that my papers were stalled on the desk of a gentleman who wasn't sure that it was a good idea to have a woman in such a responsible job. There were only three others who had rank in the State Department, one was head of the passport division, Mrs. Shipley, who is famous. Another was Blanche Halla who was in charge of correspondence in the news section in the Secretary's office. And the third was Dorothy Fosdick and the fourth would be me. I was considerably younger and less well educated and came from of all places Arizona, I mean really. If I was born in Canada was I really a whole American or not? The thing got kicked up to Mr. Acheson's office and he said, “Is she doing the job?” “Yes, doing very well.”“Fine.” And there it was solved and so I became chief of the whole division.

That was great fun. We had a very good team. Wonderful people. There wasn't anything called compensation for overtime in those days, so we really worked fantastic hours sometimes, but we were full of enthusiasm for what we were doing and it was a huge job to be done. The public opinion polls showed the people were eager to get more information, to know what would make it work better. They really cared about foreign affairs. And nobody was concerned about making imagery. We were trying to learn ourselves, to tell people how to think about foreign policy because things are so often presented in black and white, and in this case, in any case, its much more important to

look at the problem in the round and see how other people are thinking about it, other countries. Because it is with them you are going to be negotiating and if you don't know what they think then you are a bull in the china shop. This is something terribly hard to teach teachers.

Another thing I helped work on the possible interpretation of the Foreign Service Act of 1946. It was my first really close relationship to the Foreign Service and a delightful experience. I was invited to speak to a luncheon of Foreign Service wives and when I got there I was sat between two ladies, one of whom was going to Somalia, the other was going to Rome. One of them moped and moaned about how awful it was, sanitation was terrible, the people weren't honest, conditions were difficult, it meant having to learn a new language. The other one said, “Oh, the children and I are so excited. We're studying the geology, the natural history. We've gone to the dictionary; we're trying to learn some words.” Can you guess which was going where?

Q: The one who complained was going to Rome. It has to be.

MORGAN: Exactly. One of the problems we had with the Foreign Service was that, it was very like something that happened to me last week in Florida, I was being asked what did your husband do and I said he was a Foreign Service Officer.

Q: Now you were married in the meantime?

MORGAN: I'll tell you about that.

Q: Are we jumping ahead?

MORGAN: We're jumping to 1986 and then we'll go back to 1946. Let me show you how we did not succeed in what we wanted to do. This man who was about my age said, “Foreign Service? What are you doing in America?” I said it was the Foreign Service of the

United States. “I never heard we had anything like that. What do you do? Are you a bunch of spies?” This is a man who is running for office. This is 1986, August 26.

To go back to 1946, I went to NBC because I had gotten acquainted with people there from having to do my program every week, and Ben Grauer, who was the announcer for our program, was awfully nice about giving me advice. I called Ben and said, “Look, here I am down in Washington. We're very interested in trying to do a program on the Foreign Service and you've had so many years in radio, (because TV hadn't yet come in real big). What kind of program do you think would be best? We are thinking of something but I'd not like to spoil your views by suggesting.” And he said, “Have the Foreign Service people been doing something during the war?” I said, “Good heavens, yes! We haven't publicized it yet.” He said why not do something about, you know... I said, “you mean “Tales of the Foreign Service”.” He said, “Yes, that's it!”

In order to do it, there was no money in the State Department. I went to, I think it was the Carnegie Corporation, I went to the wrong fellows first anyway. Carnegie Corporation gave us the large sum of three thousand dollars, not to the State Department. There was some complication about this for tax reasons, but set aside three thousand dollars which would finance the reproduction of each program on records, which we could then explain in mimeographed material with a series of discussion questions, so that this could be used in university classrooms, in adult education and even in high schools. I must say it was a tremendous production. They had an orchestra which they provided. They paid for all the actors. It was wonderful. I don't think it had the slick, smooth professional quality that you would be demanding now, but as far as the State Department was concerned, all it cost was my time. And I only did that after I had done everything else. They got all that free, plus the Carnegie Corporation's three thousand dollar program.

Q: Would that still be in existence today? What would they be? Tapes or records?

MORGAN: I don't know. They were records. If they exist they might be in NBC files. In some college or university library there might be some of these pamphlets and discussion materials that we prepared.

Q: And what was the name of the program?

MORGAN: “Tales of the Foreign Service”.

Q: And it was Ben Grauer?

MORGAN: Ben Grauer, yes. He was a well-known radio announcer. What interested me you see, was that a lot of people were giving a great deal, because the war had given them such a sense of the futility of war. Nobody truly wanted war. We all suffered; we all lost. We succeeded in defeating the enemy, but that is slightly different from really winning. The cream of the crop in the sense of man and woman power, many of them were either killed or hurt or diverted from what would have been their productive years. We all suffered a great deal from that, and there was a universal enthusiasm for trying to do something to find new ways of solving problems between countries. We had to learn a whole new approach to a new phenomenon which was atomic energy. We had to somehow relate science and foreign policy.

This is a fascinating period. In the division of public liaison, which was my shop, we had a team that worked with about six thousand organizations, women's organizations, men's organizations, specialized professional bodies, business groups, labor groups, the whole gamut. If we could help them, help their people understand more about foreign policy questions.We handled all the speaking engagements for the Department including the Secretary of State and members of the Foreign Service. That was a big job.

Then we handled about three million letters a year commenting on foreign affairs. Some of them were congressionals that were sent to us, some were sent from the White House, but we averaged about three million a year. Each of which had to be read, summarized

and then we give reports on trends in attitudes to the public opinion branch of the Office of Public Affairs, or the Division of Public Studies, which was trying to research what public attitudes were on various issues. We tried very hard to give answers that weren't filled with waffling or the kind of stiff phrases that belong in a textbook on diplomacy of 1850. That took a lot of doing.

We continued to work with all sorts of media. We didn't have spot news for the daily press, but any feature material was forwarded to the daily press and magazines and specialized publications.

We set up a whole series of conferences around the country. The last year I was there, I think we had around three hundred. In some instances we'd get the governor of a state to call a conference of leaders within the state of various fields, trying to bring in the whole community to talk about foreign policy problems. We'd send out a couple of people from the State Department depending on the budget how much money we could afford, to be resource people and experts or make speeches.

Or we'd do what we did when George Kennan was working in policy planning staff as chief of that operation, I arranged a meeting in Wisconsin, in Milwaukee, for him to meet with the editorial staff of the newspaper there, for an off-the-record discussion of U.S. relations with the Soviet Union which was a hot topic. We had a regional conference with leaders from all over the state who came in and took part in discussions on these subjects, having been given the subjects in advance and some reading material, which was approved by the League of Women Voters and the General Federation of Women and the Chamber of Commerce.

In the area which they were going to in Michigan, I'd say, do we have any Michigan material? I was working very hard on trade policy problems, my special substantive responsibility, and we got the Department of Commerce to do studies of the stake of each state in the United States in foreign trade.

We did work in every kind of medium you could think of. From cartoons to motion pictures to whatever.It was a very exciting, very fascinating experience.

And now we come to romance.

Q: Fine.

MORGAN: My first husband had gone to war working with OWI [Office of War Information], he'd been brought up part of the time in India and they needed people who knew India in the CBI Theater [Ceylon, Burma, India]. So he had gone out there and suffered at the end of very grave battle fatigue and had a grave collapse. When he came back here he worked for a while for the State Department and he had to be institutionalized up in New York. He was very gravely ill. The doctors told me that it was very important for me to stand by and help him any way I could, but when he was well and well established it would be important for me to step out of his life because I was associated with the whole series of unpleasant difficult experiences. That's what happened. I was having to get up at four-o'clock Sunday morning and take four, five different means of transportation to get to the hospital he was in in Westchester County. I would see him, sometimes, not always, because it was not a good idea. I would have an hour with his doctor and then I'd come back to Washington to be at the office bright and early the next day. It was quite a period.

But, he did get better and we had a very friendly and gentle divorce, but it was a shattering experience no matter how gentle.

One of my bridesmaids from my first marriage had always spoken to me about her wonderful brother-in-law, who came with letters of introduction to my boss in 1946, after the war. He'd been a professor of Philosophy, written a great book on Nietzsche, which is a really great book, had fought the war and come back deciding he wanted to be more active than academic. He writes beautifully, so he was given a job in the writers branch in the Office of Public Affairs.

I used to be furious with him because he would, we were friends, but nonetheless, on a few occasions when I had a really wonderful evening, being invited to a dinner party with people I really wanted to know, I remember once the Attorney General and his wife, the Biddles, always had lovely parties, invited me to dinner and they were having some distinguished lawyers from hither and yon around the world, and they thought I would enjoy it. It couldn't have been a kinder deed. I had to call at a quarter-to-eight and say unfortunately, some documents that had to be ready by eight-o'clock in the morning, hadn't received clearance and so I had to stay and work. To do that to people like that was awful, but what was more, it was George who had to approve it.

I recognized his ability and his talents, I had great respect for him, and gosh it seemed to me it was some fatal curse that always meant that when something absolutely wonderful was going to happen - Boom - he wouldn't okay my papers. We were working under such tremendous pressure, and I must say sometimes we weren't perfect drafters, and on position papers, for example, which were for internal use, I thought it was more important to get the quality of the idea than the substance of the grammar. But he wanted both and he was quite right. That's why I was so cross.

He went off to become a Russian expert for the Foreign Service and then was stationed in Moscow a couple of years, when Walter Bedell Smith was ambassador, and then when Alan Kirk was ambassador and in the last year there he lived in Spaso House [the U.S. ambassadors residence in Moscow]. And so they were very sad when he was transferred to the High Commission in Germany because Mr. McCloy wanted someone very, very good, who could handle the problems with the Soviet Union and what was called the eastern element in HICOG, which dealt with all of the eastern countries who were subdued by the Soviet Union.

Q: Now, were you married then?

MORGAN: No, various people on my staff were being asked to go on TDY to advise hither and thither, Margaret Carter as I was at that time, had to stay home and tend the store. Finally I went to the boss and said sometime, I'd been asked to go to Japan, I'd been asked to go to Southeast Asia, I'd been asked to go over to Europe, “you've been absolutely right, but I've got a very good crowd and they're very responsible, the next time could I please accept?” And he said he thought things were running well, so I was asked by the woman who was in charge of the Women's division of HICOG to come over and give a series of lectures on what women could do in educational and community service in Germany, patterned on what they were doing in the United States, something like the League of Women Voter's, something like adult education programs that are now done primarily by community colleges in the United States, but then were done by a coalition of organized groups, often. I said I wasn't sure because I had speeches to do in San Francisco and Chicago and they said they would move the time of their conferences and meetings if I would come. It was very, very tempting.

Then someone called up and said there was a group of very important radio and, by then TV was beginning to have a little audience, TV newscasters going to go into western Germany, but go along the German border and they thought since I knew some of them it would be good to have a fresh person who wasn't bored by all the problems that people who have been in Germany didn't see as interesting news anymore. Would I do that. I went.

I'd flown to speak in Bloomington, a conference in Chicago, and fly out to San Francisco to take a plane overnight to Washington, had two hours to get down to the office and run through everything, an hour to pack and catch the plane for Europe. So I was really exhausted. All the people from the Commission, the media people were there, you might have thought I was somebody important. I said, “I'm terribly sorry everybody, but I can't keep my eyes open, I'm just exhausted. This is what I've been doing.” So everybody acknowledged the fact that I really did need some sleep. Flying jet lag. George said, “I'm

going to be here this weekend on business at the station in Berlin." This was in Frankfurt. "How would you like , just for a change of scene to go down to Heidelberg tomorrow morning?There's a train I know about."

And I said, "Will it help the job?"

He said, "Yes, I think it might, because it will show you what conditions are like outside of Frankfurt."

So I said fine and we went down, we walked around and he showed me this and that. Then it was time to come back and I fell asleep just walking. I slept all the way back to Frankfurt. I must say it was very comfortable. And then I had to rush off. The next day Mr. McCloy wanted to see me so I went in and he said, "I want you to go up to Berlin tomorrow, the first of May, it's very important for you to see the contrast between East Germany and West Germany in Berlin. It's one of the very important things I think you should know about and participate.Do you know George Morgan?"

I said, "Well yes, I did."

And he said, "Well, do you suppose you know him well enough to ask him to put you up? The guest house, is completely filled up."

I said, "I guess it would be all right. I don't know. Let me think about this arrangement."

His secretary called and George said he'd be delighted to put me up. In fact he'd meet me at the airplane. But he couldn't spend the evening with me because he had to go to a dinner. I said, "Thank God! All I want to do is sleep." This feeling of desperation for sleep is amazing.

I got up there the next morning at a quarter to seven and we set off for East Berlin. It was a tremendous shock. You could read about it. You could hear about it, but to see it was something else. All the radio equipment was blaring out propaganda. Buildings still rubble;

people queued up to get a couple of potatoes; everybody looking dirty and gray, smelling unclean. Of course they were unclean.

I remember one little boy being slapped by a German guard, of the East German government because he'd asked for a piece of bread while a parade was passing by and the father gave him the bread and the little boy wasn't supposed to do anything but stand at attention. The whole think was so utterly shocking.

Q: What year is this?

MORGAN: Nineteen fifty-one. May first.

Q: Labor Day.

MORGAN: May Day parade. We had then been asked, George had been asked, and I also had actually been asked to come over to West Berlin to a reception given by the Swiss Consul General in Berlin, and to meet Mayor Reuter, who I had met in Washington. After a long time we went back and listened to Mayor Reuter give an excellent speech. And the feeling when you got in West Berlin people were relaxed, people were laughing, people were literally laughing. I didn't see any laughter at all in East Berlin.

We went to the cocktail party, it wasn't a cocktail party it was a reception, noonday reception. Then George said, “Would you like to go sit in my garden?”

And I said, “I'd love it. I have to get over this shock.” Which really had been a profound shock.

So when we got back George said, “I don't want to bother you in your state of shock but would you marry me?”

George had once asked me to marry him after I was divorced and I'd said no.

And in a state of shock myself, I said yes.

It was extraordinary because we were both very surprised. You see I owe it all to the communists.

Then the problem was I had a very full program. I had to go make a speech that night and the next morning leave at a very early hour to start on the Woman's Group tour. Going to the airport George said, “Now that we're engaged...”

And I said, “What?”

He said, “Don't you remember we're engaged?”

I said, “Oh, yes.”

“Now that we're engaged, when are we going to get married?”

“Oh, two or three years. I've got so much work in Washington and some other things.”

George said, “You know, that really doesn't make much sense. You'll get so involved you'll never get married. Why don't you get married while you're over here on TDY?”

I said, “That's not done. I can't do that sort of thing. I can't I've obligations.”

And George said, “Well, I'll call you at five o'clock today.”

I said, “Don't I'm making a speech.”

“I'll keep calling until I can get you.”

I was going to be in Stuttgart. And he said, “Think seriously.” He gave me a chaste kiss on the forehead and I gave him a chaste kiss on the cheek. It was almost as if I were living in a dream world. My mind was very focused on the job, you know, but as I rode down in

the plane I suddenly realized that something had happened in East Berlin. It was lovely to devote your total life to the job as I had been doing, but also human values, personal values were important and I had been neglecting those. Here was a perfectly wonderful person and I had hated his guts because he kept me up to a certain standard and that's a good thing. He was a perfectly wonderful person and as I began thinking I suddenly discovered I really must be in love with him. I didn't know it.

We got to Stuttgart and I made my speech and got a phone call and he said what about the nineteenth of May. I said, “The nineteenth of May.”

He said, “Yes, I've checked with everybody, found out what your program's going to be. You'll be free and will have taken your radio people all around the border. It would work out beautifully. And I think the Kirks can come from Moscow for the wedding.”

I said, “I don't have any clothes for getting married. I don't have anything.” You know. I was speechless.

He said, “It's all right. Until we're married I will be your father. I will take care of every arrangement for you. I understand you are coming up to Berlin at such and such a date - I've forgotten what it was.”

Q: Is he considerably older than you are?

MORGAN: No, he's almost nine years older. He'd been married and had two children, but had been divorced for eleven years so it was almost like marrying an old bachelor. Anyway, it was crazy because I was a divided soul. I really didn't think much about getting married, but I had sent a cable to Washington asking whether I would get permission to get married. George had said it would be nice to have a honeymoon in Italy. Friends of his had a villa in Florence and they would love to put us up. That sounded very nice. I cabled Washington saying would it be possible to interrupt work here to get married and have a honeymoon in Florence ten days from the scheduled program. I got back a perfectly

hilarious telegram, you know all telegrams are signed Acheson, saying, “What? Good God! Wonderful! Yes! Sure!” So there we were.

Q: Signed Acheson. Wonderful!

MORGAN: I had to go back to Berlin for making a talk up there about May 10, somewhere in there and George took me shopping to get an engagement ring which is this. I had bought some curtain material in the PX to make curtains for my house in Washington and he had found a dressmaker who would make that into a dress. So we saw her for ten minutes. Then he gave me a perfectly beautiful silk coat to wear which also had to be measured for, I didn't know it was going to be given to me. I had to go back to work. Then I found a pair of white shoes in the PX and somebody gave me a piece of pink ribbon to put around my waist. Then there we were off again with my friends in the press TV group. My God, this is the funniest thing that had ever happened to me. We had a lovely time because they were teasing me. A couple of them were driving back to Frankfurt from the border, so I was going to get back to Berlin the night before I was to be married and have a chance to try on all of this stuff the next day. Then there were two services. One an official German thing where you go to a registry office.

Q: A municipal building or something like that.

MORGAN: I hadn't even been practical enough to think that I might have to change my name. They asked me what my signature was going to be. I hadn't any idea so I just wrote the whole thing the way it was. All my names. It looked like a railroad train with a caboose added on.

Brewster and Ellen Morris who were beloved Foreign Service friends of both of us came up from Bad Godesberg to be our best man and matron of honor. General Mathewson who was commandant in Berlin of the American forces was going to be my 'Papa'. We had

a lovely marriage in the Lutheran Church in Berlin and had ten days in Florence and lots of adventures.

Then I had to finish my work and go back to Washington and prepare the budget for the next year and train somebody to take over my job on a permanent basis, and then finish all the commitments I had. And that was my introduction to being a Foreign Service wife. Before we left Berlin I had tripped over and broken a glass and I was instructed that I must pick up all the pieces and go like a penitent child to the stores division of HICOG and present the glass so that they could replace it with a form of glass.

Q: This was an embassy glass?

MORGAN: It wasn't really an embassy glass, a mission glass. But the point was, I was certainly made aware of the fact that I was a non-person. A total non-person and I wasn't entitled to anything.In fact I wasn't entitled to have any of my effects come to Germany because I had been married in Germany. There just were a whole series of what I felt were unnecessary, abusive attitudes because I was still the same person, I was still doing a big job and I was still working very hard. I was in a wife role being treated as if I were a non-intelligent, ignorant really, little woman who wasn't capable of managing anything.

This was demeaning and something that George and I determined when we got back together after three months was one of the things that I could do as a Foreign Service wife was try to improve the position and the role of the Foreign Service wife. Which is very important. So, when George some years later became Director of the Foreign Service Institute two of the things he started that were very exciting on a regular basis were concern for wives and family program of training courses, permission for the women to take some languages, not all, and as a program of science and foreign policy, trying to bring foreign policy thinking into a world which is drastically changed.

Q: Now you have just given him credit for all of this. A lot of it was attributed to you, was it not?

MORGAN: But we've been a team and that is the wonderful thing about having been a professional person in the same field. I could do memoranda of conversation which would be very helpful because it was I who sat next to the Foreign Minister at dinners or I who had to make noises to people, so why not talk about things that were interesting instead of how many children do you have and what was the weather like last year. This didn't mean that I was trying to be my husband, on the contrary, I would ask him what were the things that he felt were important to know to more about, what was on his peoples' mind. And maybe if they said something to me that I thought was sensitive, I'd ask their permission, would it be possible for me to tell my husband? Almost invariably it was granted. They used me as a way of unofficially getting information across that they couldn't officially do.

Q: Where are you now? Are you speaking in general or..?

MORGAN: No, this is in general, whenever we were in the field. I conceived of the wife's role not only as the hostess but as an intelligent citizen of the United States trying to use all the abilities and capacities that they had to help their country. Of course we didn't get paid for it. Of course our representation never covered everything.

I remember when we had a group from the Senate coming to Tokyo, which was a post we had from 1954 to 1958, and there wasn't any money for representation and there were forty people for dinner and there was the U.S. Senate, the Ambassador said lay it on. Well, we did at the expense of a new winter coat for my husband and quite a few things that we had wanted to spend the money for. It was our vacation money we were using that we had saved to entertain these people. Some of them were saying in what luxury we lived, how beautifully we dined, and I said, “Sure, we're putting on the dog for you. Do you know what we're giving up in order to entertain you in the style to which you like to be accustomed?,, A couple of senators said why don't I explain. And I said, “I'm telling you this not in anger,

but I think you people simply don't understand the kinds of problems that people in the field have. I think it would be a very good idea to all of you to devote more attention to seeing that we have the tools with which to work."

I made some very good friends on that trip with some of the wives and later when I was a Foreign Service wife in Washington, my husband was posted here, I had a whole series of seminars with Senate wives, Congressional wives, different groups coming in to talk about, sitting around our round dining room table in our little old cottage house up on 34th Place, trying to share ideas.

I remember one famous newspaperman's wife who was sitting in on one of these things. "I never knew that you didn't have millions of dollars to spend on entertaining people. And I thought that's all you did."

And I said, "Yes, that's all you come and see. How can you know otherwise."

Q: Perhaps we were at fault for putting ourselves out for them. Perhaps we should have let them see how it was.

MORGAN: I raised this very seriously with the administration here in Washington when I came back because I felt that we were making a mistake. There were several bird dogs up on the Hill, gentlemen elected by people of the United States, who wanted to be sure that we didn't squander American money, but golly!

Q: Mr. Rooney.

MORGAN: I wasn't going to say that. As a matter of fact, Mr. Rooney turned up at a reception that was being given by Ambassador and Mrs. Allison in Japan. Helen Keller was the guest of honor. Because my husband was political counselor at the embassy, I'd helped list the Japanese who could come and who would be interested in Helen Keller, because George's and my job, since he was the political counselor was to know Japan,

Japanese people, Japanese life and who moved in those circles. I was helping some of my Japanese friends talk with Miss Keller because I spoke some Japanese, enough so that they could say what they wanted to have said and then I would translate and then her friend who always translated for her would explain and then would come back. Mr. Rooney came up and he said, “I just saw somebody take eight lumps of sugar.”

I said, “Mr. Rooney, yes, they do that in this country. They like things very, very sweet.”

And he said, “Who's paying for the eight lumps of sugar?” I looked at him in astonishment.

“Do you mean you go around counting sugar and spoons. Would you like to look at my hands? Do you see those callouses? They're from mowing our lawn with a twelve-inch lawn mower because we cannot, the embassy cannot afford to have the grounds taken care of in the big house we live in. So I do them. I mow the lawn. It takes me six hard hours. Feel those hands. Feel those callouses. You don't get those out here.”

Q: What did he say?

MORGAN: He said, “You're very indignant.”

I said, “Certainly. I believe in justice and honor.”

He looked at me and said, “Well, you keep it up.” And he put his arms around me and he gave me a hug. Which was very interesting. I told the ambassador about it and he said instead of always trying to put our shiny shoes...

End of Tape 1, Side B

Q: I'm rather fascinated with Japan, because I feel with your husband as political counselor you felt that you could speak up and you did.

MORGAN: Well, I spoke up on behalf of Foreign Service people, but even before that, when I went back to Berlin in 1951, I didn't get there until September, my effects, for which I had to pay the shipping, only arrived, I'd shipped them in May, and they only arrived sometime in October. At that point we got word that George was transferred back to New York. So nothing got unpacked except to check it to see if anything is broken because we had to reinsure it. We were being transferred back to New York, but I spent the time in Berlin trying to see what the impact of Naziism had been on the German mind. Whether people were trying to sweep it under the rug or they were trying to forget it. What the effect on education was going to be. What the effect on women's status was going to be. It was a fascinating topic.

Q: Now at this time you were a spouse. Were you doing that for your own information or were you...? Because you couldn't work could in the embassy?

MORGAN: No, I wasn't allowed to work. I was not allowed to work.

Q: I know. Were you volunteering with an organization?

MORGAN: No, I was doing this and sending the material back to my old shop. Because we were in a project that was trying to interpret some of this and I thought I was just continuing the job I had started in the early part of the Spring, when I had gone over in May. I had much more opportunity to go much to go a little bit in depth. And then some of our old newspaper friends turned up and I took them out to East Berlin and showed them behind the scenes in a way that just wandering through on your own you couldn't get. I kept very busy actually.

But I also learned what a Foreign Service wife could do, what the tolerance levels were in terms of independent thinking and judgement. It was an interesting period there as well as here. Women were emerging, but there was a very strong repressive influence to keep them in their place whatever that unwell defined place might be.

Q: Are you talking about in Europe, in Germany? Or say in our mission in Germany?

MORGAN: No, no, in Germany itself. But also to some extent in the mission. Fortunately some of the people who were there I had known professionally and they treated me a little bit differently than if I had been a what they called a 'normal' Foreign Service wife which I thought was an awful term. One man said to me what should we do about this situation and I said I'd just arrived and I'm not allowed to talk, to drive it home. He said, “Oh well, sorry, but I really would genuinely like to have your professional opinion.”

I said, “Am I allowed to give it?” Because he had been responsible for telling some other people.

He said, “Yes, you are. It's an order.” We had a good talk.

There was an interesting experience in New York then. We came back and George was supposed to be an expert for the Voice of America on something. We had one tiny little room in a rooming house arrangement on the west side of New York. It had one hot plate and I did the laundry in the bathtub, the public bathtub, I got permission to use it from x to x. It was quite an experience after being in comfort in Berlin. But then the Psychological Strategy Board in Washington wanted George and after six weeks we came down here.

So then my boss, former boss, asked me to come back to the State Department and take up where I'd left off. But I had become pregnant by then and I thought that since I was well in middle age, I was 38 or 39, something like that, I'd better not have a high pressure job that required a great deal of airplane travel and stuff because I did have a responsibility as a potential parent. So the Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs asked me to come back and work for him as special assistant. Which I did, did all sorts of writing speeches and odd jobs, you know, there's a tremendous amount to do in an office like that. It was fun because I had worked for him for a long time, the greater gift being on the inside, seeing the whole show. I worked up until the day before the baby was supposed to be born. One

of the last things that happened, I had a big executive's chair I guess they call it in the FBO, and a man from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce was coming over to talk about their international affairs platform which he was planning for the next conference. As he walked into the room I got up to greet him but the chair, I was unwieldy and the chair tipped over and there I was on the floor with the chair on top of me like a turtle, my neck sticking out. It shocked him so that he fainted. I screamed to my secretary who came and said, “Oh, Mrs. Morgan, are you all right?”

I said, “I'm all right but he's fainted. Quick get some water.” I was having to drink two gallons of milk a day and she couldn't find water so she poured cold milk on his head while I crawled out from my carapace and found him. he looked up, he began coming to, and he said, “Are you all right?” I took his pulse and soon realized that he was all right, it was just the shock. He said, “Are you all right?”

And I said, “Are you all right?” He's quite a large, heavy man so I couldn't help very much to get him back on his feet. That was a lovely farewell.

My daughter, infant, took about three weeks more to get born. Meanwhile I had been asked to do a job on some study materials for the National Education Association to help teachers, it was a volunteer job. They couldn't pay me because my payroll didn't end at the State Department, I had accumulated leave and all that sort of thing until the end of June, so I couldn't even accept any payment for the job. We did study guides for teachers on how to study foreign policy problems, how to study the problems of Germany and France and Italy and so forth.

So the baby got born and some of my ex-colleagues in the Division of Public Liaison came streaming in to see the funny picture of me having a baby because it was so funny. I was in a ward because we really couldn't afford anything better, I wanted to be in a ward anyway. There were seven other young mothers, I counted as a young mother only in terms of maternal experience. A young intern came in and said, “I want to get everybody's

name and age on these records here.You, you, you, you, and you.” I was the last person he got to and he said, “Your name?”

I said, “Margaret Morgan.”

“And how old are you?”

And I said thirty-eight, and a pall fell over the room. Absolute silence. We'd been having fun; we'd throw pillows at each other; all the electricity in the hospital had gone off and all the water supply had been cut off, so we'd had a few shared adventures together and suddenly one little girl said, “But Peggy, you're old enough to be my mother!”

And I said, “I am not.” It took twenty-four hours to get back to the give and take, the fun and games attitude. It's really quite an interesting experience because it helped me to understand generation gap problems later on. Or problems in the Foreign Service for example, we had some older people come into younger positions at one post we were at, there was this sort of feeling, at least among some people that they shouldn't be there. So you had to stir up the broth a little bit and get people to thinking about other things because there's no point in putting artificial barriers up between people.

It's most important to work together as a team, in sharing experience, and it is something my husband taught me. Because I always overbook, as you noticed today I get late to things and I try not to, but it happens. In this instance a few days in married life in Berlin before I had to come back to America, we were going to a very fancy dinner that the British were giving and my husband said, instead of standing with his eyes on his watch and glaring at me, he said, “Can I help you in any way to make it a little easier?” I thought, Wow, I'm learning a lesson here. And I learned it really for the rest of my life, I think.

After we were in Washington, shortly, I was talking to a couple of Foreign Service wives about how important it is to zip up the Foreign Service women's associations. There's just so many important things they could do. And with so many people talking about

Washington tours as hell because they were so lonely, they didn't belong anywhere and nobody wanted them and so on. And then I discovered that the wife of the Director General of the Foreign Service had already begun working with a couple of people so we all amalgamated forces and drew up a constitution, I think some of my pearls of prose are still in that thing. We struggled over a name. We had a great deal of trouble deciding what the name should be.

Q: What year are we now?

MORGAN: In, I think '52, early '52. They decided finally on a name that was acceptable and it had to be cleared with the Department and all that stuff, also AFSA [American Foreign Service Association]. Then there was an election of officers and appointment of committee chairmen. I had been a candidate, not by choice, for the presidency, because I didn't feel I could do it with a new baby and by then another one coming, we had to work fast because I was getting old.

They asked me to head the education committee and this was to see what could be done about Foreign Service children coming to schools in Washington. What we could do about getting scholarships at schools and colleges and universities. How to support a program for an educational adviser who could help advise families here and overseas about the problems of their children. To open up possibilities for help for children who have handicap problems, physical, psychological, etc., etc. And then to develop better relations with a committee of the American Foreign Service Association which was handling scholarships. I was invited to be a member of that committee and was for the seven long years of our Washington tour. And meanwhile the education committee began having quite an interesting time talking with schools, (public schools, the public school system, private schools, private school systems. Each private school had its own ideas), and talking to a few very wealthy, older people who might like to leave some money to help support the children. I felt that the children were the most long suffering members of the Foreign Service community. People said the Foreign Service experience was marvelous. Well,

it was but they had to pay for it in a great, great many ways. They had no sense of roots unless there were grandparents firmly installed somewhere or a family connection that was very real. Otherwise, where did they belong? And when they came back to schools the crowds had already been formed, the clubs or whatever. They were on the outside and one dance a year didn't seem to me adequate to help meet people. At any rate the education committee did a lot of exploring and as much action as we could.

Then I thought that part of the education problem is educating the public too about the Foreign Service world and that's when I began my seminars which were fun. We tried to get a cross section of all sorts of people, young and old in experience. We discussed, I remember once we had three wives from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Betty Fulbright, Pauline Gore, I've forgotten who the other was, and Mary Ellen Mulroney, all whose husbands were leaders in the Senate, with four, one young, one middle-aged, one experienced and one retired Foreign Service wife to exchange thoughts on what the Foreign Service wife problem was. And the ignorance was appalling, also our ignorance about the Senate wife's role was. We exchanged notes. It made the Senate wives feel if they were making a contribution and I think the Foreign Service wives got a good deal out of it. It helped them a lot when they were on post and had congressional visitors. That went on.

Meanwhile, we had two children, and my husband had two from a previous marriage, so we had a nice little family of four. The older ones were by then of course in school, in college.

I did a lot of consulting work with the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. Then in 1954 we were sent to Japan, George as political counselor.

I studied Japanese like mad; I'm lousy at languages. I don't even speak English very well, so getting another language for me is really very hard work. I studied Japanese very, very hard every morning. It seems to me I was getting up before the sun ever thought of rising

everyday, studying and then going to class, ended at eight-o'clock. That meant that shortly I was able to do some things, but our children were the best. They just spoke Japanese with complete fluency, so in crisis situations I would produce a child, I'd say, “What is she trying to tell me?” This is important because the children felt they were doing something useful.

I have a photograph of one morning party which wasn't going very well. I had embassy wives trying to meet Japanese ladies. One of the most wonderful women I knew there was a lady-in-waiting to the Empress, who was her English interpreter. I remember, her name is Takaki, Tatsue Takaki, she told me a lot about her life. She had been in America as a young bride and been locked in her apartment day after day after day because she didn't speak any English and her husband didn't want anything to happen to her. Finally after two or three years of this inane kind of life, she went to the ballet school of the YWCA. Once upon a time I had been on the national board of the YWCA; it was one of the things I had to give up when I went to work for the State Department. We had been very concerned about whether or not the ballet school had been performing a valuable function in New York. It taught English to foreigners and helped do orientation programs for non-Americans among many other things. And here was living proof, because Mrs. Takaki learned English, learned it very well, learned confidence, learned something about how to cope with American life and ended up with a very significant role.

She was the official interpreter and when VIPs from the United States would turn up and have to meet Emperor and Empress I could always talk to Mrs. Takaki and help her know what the people were like so the Empress would know what to talk about. It was great fun. She was being a little bit busy because she had to go on duty at this morning reception and I had two little girls who were studying Japanese dancing at this age, two and three, turn to Mrs. Takaki, who was the senior guest, and said, “Would you like us to do some Japanese dances?” They were dressed in kimono. Mrs. Takaki said she would be enchanted, so quickly out came the phonograph. I was meanwhile taking another friend whose husband was Chief Justice of Japan out to show her some spinach I was growing

in the garden. I came back to find our two daughters doing Japanese dances, including flipping fans, at this tiny age, for a delighted group of Japanese ladies. It couldn't have been more entrancing for them because it showed we really were taking an interest in Japanese life and so on. They were enchanted by it. I got a letter last Spring from one of the ladies who had been there asking whether the girls remembered anything of their Japanese dancing. She hadn't forgotten that.

Q: Thirty years later. More that thirty years later.

MORGAN: In Japan there were some very interesting women in the embassy and Japanese women on the embassy staff. George wanted me to concentrate on trying to know as many Japanese people as possible, male and female, but especially female because I being female it was much easier.

I had a wonderful time learning enough Japanese so that I sat on the board of the Japanese-American Women's Association as an officer. I was the only non-Japanese in that group. They conducted business in Japanese and I was able to keep up. But I learned a great deal from them. It was a marvelous experience. In America you're very blunt and have head on decisions and you say when you have a meeting you go by Robert's Rules of Order and you're out of order. None of this. We conducted meetings with great decorum and with great system. They were very efficiently organized. But you never embarrassed anybody by taking violent issue with them. You could do what my husband has always called share a difference of view, which has been the basis of our marriage and we do share a difference of view on many things. But we share it; we don't fight each other.

At any rate, an issue came up, it was just my first meeting, and we went around asking everyone's opinion and they got to me. I didn't know all the words I wanted to find in Japanese, so I did a sort of mixed language mixture and said, “I don't quite understand. I don't think you have considered this, this and this. And possibly, just possibly, something else would be better.” So they decided to table the motion. The next morning my telephone

rang. I got home from classes if I wasn't doing the marketing that day by nine-o'clock. The phone rang.

“Could I come and see you?” This was from the president of the Association.“I'd be honored. When would you like to come?” “Would eleven-o'clock today be alright?” “Yes. May I give you coffee? Or tea?”

“No, no. I would just like to come and have the pleasure of talking with you.”

So she came and we talked about everything under the sun. The girls were having a Japanese dancing lesson and we watched that for a little while. I thought there is something here I'm not grasping and I'm missing the cue. I said, “You know I'm terribly embarrassed about what happened yesterday. I didn't want to cause anyone to table the motion. I just thought possibly they hadn't considered this point.”

And she said, “Well, as a matter of fact we hadn't. Could you tell me a little bit more about it?”

So I suddenly saw this is what she had come for. I should have caught on much sooner. We talked and she said, “Oh, that's very interesting, yes, yes, yes, I think you have a very a very good point.” We talked in English. It was much easier.

That afternoon I got another call from another lady on the committee. There were nine of us all together. In the next four days everyone of those ladies came from wherever she come from, an hour away, even further, to talk over the situation. At the next meeting, the following week, everything, all the business had been gone through, and we got to other business and I said, “I don't understand what's happened about the thing we've all been discussing the past week?”

“Oh, its all been decided.”

“What did you decide?”

“We all came and talked to you. We all agreed with your position. We decided. We're moving ahead that way.”

I said, “Thank you very much. I'm very grateful to you all.” I learned a lot about how to negotiate and I got a letter just two weeks ago from a Japanese friend who had two sons running in the last election and got their seat because they were Nakasone supporters and Nakasone won. She said, “You know, I”, she has a lot of influence, “I am so happy that the election is over and I don't have to campaign anymore because”, she said, “its much more fun to sit behind the scenes and see what's going on and work from there instead of being out in front.”

I thought, “aha, this is the clue again. All these years I've never learned how to explain it.” But this is the clue to a great deal of Japanese behavior. Sometimes it is awfully hard to know who makes the decisions. You know the nominal president and executive secretary, but who actually makes the decisions. This comment I got from her was wonderful.

We can learn so much from the countries we're in. Even countries where we know the women, and men, have not had the equal of our education. Many of them are very wise in human relations and we can learn so much wherever we go. After Japan, which is filled with fascination, one of the most exciting posts I think I've been in, we came back to Washington and we were here for seven years. That was fascinating because I learned a lot more and I worked in the White House as a State Department Liaison officer, a theoretical part-time which was not. I got paid for part-time, but in fact I was working full time on trade policy.

Q: This would have been in the late '50s?

MORGAN: No, early '60s, in the Kennedy administration. Then I got a bright idea for the State Department and the Foreign Service Women's Association to put on an exhibit of

all the work that women were doing as volunteers all over the world. And educate people up on the Hill. Again no money for it and I didn't have the brains to go ask for a foundation grant, I just got started. We were allowed to use the pouch to get communications to people. We sent out to every post a request for information and pictures, especially pictures about the volunteer work that was being done, past, present or future planned. We got back over six-thousand pictures and I suppose about twelve-thousand projects from everywhere. I had to organize all that stuff.

Q: Extraordinary number really.

MORGAN: It was fantastic. Dean Rusk was then Secretary of State, and Dean was very excited about the project. He thought it was very important and so he told me I could ask for the help of the graphics people of the State Department in mounting the exhibit. He would send word out they I was to be given space to show it.

Virginia Rusk, who is just superb, said she would help get people down from the Hill and she'd get Mrs. [Lady Bird] Johnson, who was the Vice-President's wife to come and see it. We had streams of women coming down from the Hill, members of Congress wives, staff aides, et cetera. I got Mrs. Bolton who was a Republican, one of the few women in Congress to come down too, and get all the women in Congress she knew to come down and some of the men she thought might be helped by it. We really had quite a show in the Department. Ten days before the Kennedy assassination, Mrs. Johnson came and Mrs. Rusk introduced her and she gave a talk to all the Foreign Service wives who were there and the wives who had done various projects were there by their pictures to explain to her what it was like and what was done. She said she was profoundly impressed. She had no idea that this was going on. Mrs. Rusk was very dear because she said I was responsible and I said I wasn't. The people who were the people in the field who were doing all this. I just happened...

End Tape 2, Side A

..I didn't personally pack everything up. I did get down once to be sure that everything was in proper categories. And at one point it was stored, I was told upstairs on the top floor of the State Department building, where the books were stored, but we got sent to the field and I really don't know what happened. But Mrs. Rusk was absolutely superb about supporting us and helping us. She got diplomatic wives from the diplomatic corps to come. She invited them personally and served them tea or coffee in lovely chunky mugs from the cafeteria. She couldn't have been more supportive and more helpful, nor was her husband any less supportive. I really felt that you couldn't have ever expected a tenth of what they did for the program.

Q: Yes, I have heard that from others that Virginia Rusk was perhaps the one Secretary of State wife who really ...

MORGAN: She threw her whole heart into the job. We became good friends. George was made ambassador to Ivory Coast, and we went off with the children and they learned French. Having spent a couple of years at the Cathedral School they learned to say yes and no but they didn't get much further so it was quite a plunge to suddenly have to learn French, which they did very well. We got a tutor for them too.

Mrs. Rusk was giving a reception and lunch on the Sequoia, which is the presidential yacht, for the wife of the President of the Ivory Coast and the wife of the Ambassador of the Ivory Coast.

Q: Houphouet-Boigny? [President of the Ivory Coast since 1960]

MORGAN: Houphouet-Boigny and Mme. Houphouet and also Mme. Be die, Honore Be die was then the Ivory Coast ambassador here. She [Mrs. Rusk] turned to me and said, “Why don't we ask Anne and Gael to go on the trip and let them interpret for us?” These are our daughters. They knew Mme. Be die of course and Ambassador Be die and they knew Mme. Houphouet so this was a lovely, homey touch.

Mme. Houphouet had brought one of her adopted children with her and so our children helped escort this little girl around and her sister had come and they knew her, so it was all very cozy. But Mrs. Rusk thinks of things like that.

Q: She's still alive.

MORGAN: She's alive but she has multiple sclerosis and she had it while she was wife of Secretary of State. She never complained. She had to give up driving her car because she got dizzy spells and only a few people knew that. Because all that she did was official, it was alright she felt to use a car and driver, and also much safer.

But I remember once at midnight she called me when we were planning the program for women in the Ivory Coast delegation, they had been at three receptions and a dinner and she was terribly sorry to be calling me so late but that next morning she would be tied up with something else, so could I tell her, and then she had made somewhere in the course of her day's activities a list of things about the Houphouet family that she could talk with Mme. Houphouet about. Most people would have just collapsed, its-been-a-heck-of-a-day-I'll-play-it-by-ear, but no, she was so thorough. She did say the last time I saw her, he had retired as Secretary of State, she said, “I don't think I'll ever write another letter. If you don't hear from me just know that you're in my heart, but I just don't think I could write another letter.” She was totally exhausted, but such a wonderful human being and helped the Foreign Service wives in a great many ways behind the scenes. She was very quiet. I told her laughingly that she was like some of my Japanese friends working behind the scenes very quietly. [The Ivory Coast] was our first and last African post. It was a wonderful experience because the children went first to the College Jean Mermoz which was a French school and most of the French children went there. But they wanted very much to go to a school where there were more African children. Houphouet had a remarkable vision of a role women could play if they were given an education. And so when he was a member of the French cabinet in Paris, he met a representative of an order of women in France who have a vocation, in other words, they are dedicated, Roman

Catholics, dedicated to taking vows, but they're not accepted by Rome as proper nuns because they are too ecumenical. They want to work with people of all faiths, just not Roman Catholics.

He asked Mlle. de Vassilot to come down to Abidjan to see what could be done to start a school. She started it in an apartment building, a very bare apartment building, the rooms were no bigger than this room. It also had some plumbing. When we first got there this was the school “College Sainte Marie”. (It's now a Lycee.) Our youngest daughter was accepted there. She didn't have the proper French credentials but they accepted her. Then they moved with a grant from the EEC, the European Economic Community, to a brand new beautiful school that had room for 500 boarders and space also for day students, of course we were day students. Girls came there not only from Ivory Coast, but from other Francophone countries and some Anglophone countries. It was really a very superior educatioAfter the first year at College Jean Mermoz our youngest daughter developed a terrible case of amoebic and had to be in a room for a year. She couldn't do anything. But then they accepted her at College Sainte Marie for the following year. I found out what her studies were to be and when after three or four months she was able to look at the paper (she lost her eyesight for awhile), she was able to read and worked on French. She watched Abidjan television for the French. They have lots of stuff, programs coming from France. And in the end they accepted, gave her credit for a full year's work and pushed her ahead with her class, where she was at the top of the class. So they thought that they were justified, they told me later, in having done this.

Our older daughter was a year in advance and she went to another, College du Cocody, another college for a year, again, for two years actually. The level of that learning was not as high as in the woman's college, which is now a lycee , and so both girls were in it finally and worked very hard and learned French and learned a lot of things and made lots and lots of friends among their African classmates. Through them I learned a lot about African thought and customs.

I did volunteer work at the school. Tried to explain the American election system to the entire school. It was hilarious. The electoral college threw them completely because college, yes, well it wasn't quite right, it was a university. Translation is a great problem. Then we got some wives in the American Embassy to volunteer too at the school, so the girls had an opportunity to meet a variety of Americans which is important for them because they were also studying English. The woman who taught English was French and I learned a lot from the Japanese which I applied because Gael, our younger daughter, came home one day and she said, “Mommy, Madame tells us that in English you say 'cradle' [pronounced with a short 'a' as in 'cat']. You rock your baby in a 'cradle' “ And she said, “Isn't it 'cradle' [long 'a']?”

I said, “Yes, it is cradle.”

She said, “Mommy, could you find a tactful way of not embarrassing her and telling her that?”

I said, “Oh, dear!” Another tough one. So, I went over to see her, they lived nearby, and talked to her and said, “I would love to know the translations of a whole group of 'adle' words in French. For example, ladle, cradle, sable, table. How did they translate into French. I thought it was a very Japanese way of going about.

Q: Talk about a transference of culture.”

MORGAN: The next time it came out right in class. We keep in touch with some of these people. I just got a letter from one not long ago. She has a young grandson who wants to spend a couple of months in the United States learning American English next summer and did I know any nice family that would like to take him in and then send a child to France to live with his family next year. That's one of the projects I'm involved with.

This is a very important part of being in the Foreign Service, the friends you make. Mrs. Takaki, when we were in Japan, the lady-in-waiting to the Empress, said, “You know, Isometimes feel you Americans don't like us.”

And I said, “Why?',

And she said, “Because you're great friends when you are here, then we never hear from you again.”

I said, “Well, Mrs. Takaki, if you don't hear from me it will be because I've had my right arm cut off or because I'm dead.” So I kept, she'd dead now, but I kept writing her from Africa, Europe, all sorts of places. I kept up with many, many of our Japanese friends. The children's dancing teacher, our daughters are now in their thirties, but last year both of them went to Japan, one of them was writing a book on Japan, last autumn they went to Japan, and their Japanese dancing teacher, whose husband had been a Japanese diplomat and was dead, invited them to come and stay with her in Tokyo, (they were in Kobe) stay with her in Tokyo because she thought of them as her children.

Q: I was going to ask you what your daughters were doing now?”

MORGAN: Well, one of them as a Ph.D. in psychometrics from the University of Vienna and is a sculptor as well. The other rebelled against the limitations of some of the colleges she went to see when I took her on a college cruising expedition and said she'd decided she'd rather try to do some self-education. It had worked for the daughter of Sir Thomas More, she didn't see why it couldn't work for her. She was a musician and she wanted to study the viola and if she went to college she'd have to give up the viola because many of the places that she was interested in didn't have a good viola teacher. So she studied at the Hochschule fur Musik in Vienna. It is university level music. But unfortunately she had a very serious brain concussion in an accident and the vibrations from the viola are too heavy. That 1/64,000 vibrations a second are tremendously heavy because its

the heaviest instrument you hold in your arm and because the neck rest is right under your head, the vibrations go right into your brain. She had to give up the dream of a professional musical career.

Q: How absolutely sad.

MORGAN: It was terribly sad. She can play the viola now but she can't play for more than half-hour at a time without having a terrible headache come. So it would have been impossible to play in an orchestra or to be a concert violist. It would be totally impossible.

But she has the knowledge of music she gained and she happens to be the best writer in a family of writers, much the best writer. She has wonderful style in French and in German and in English; She just is a born writer apparently. The writing takes muscle just like everything else. You have to do it over and over to learn to better.

She went on a crafts tour of Japan two years ago because she's been very much interested in getting to those roots. But not on the beaten track. She found that there were great areas which she almost, because she had been a child in Japan and had a Japanese nurse and we'd gone into all sorts of nooks and crannies together even when she was a very small child. I remember she spent half-a-day sitting at the feet of the lantern-maker in our neighborhood learning about lantern-making and his philosophy about learning lantern-making, this tiny little girl. I was there too and we both learned. But she learned in a more lasting way. This made her interested in crafts in Japan and she's written an absolutely enchanting book which has gotten into some tangles because somebody else thinks it should be hacked up and done a different way. I don't know what's going to happen.

Now she's in Austria. She's marvelous about talking with people and learning all sorts of fascinating things from them, and she went a couple of months ago on a trip in a tiny little narrow gauge railroad along the Czech border and talked to all the people who live along the Czech border as she went, people who rode the train, what they did, what it had

been like before, what it had been like under the Nazis, what it was like now, and what they hoped it would be. Just that one trip has produced a vast amount of material which I suggested she do a book on being absent of modern life in Never-never-land because Austria is a kind of Never-never-land. It's a truncated part of what it used to be and it's a fascinating country of contradiction and beauty simultaneously. I don't know if she's going to do it but I hope so.

Meanwhile she's written, she writes marvelous letters, and one German speaking friend of hers has had all the letters she's ever gotten from Gael bound and reads them to people because they're so beautiful and fascinating. Philosophy of life, how you cope with it and that.

Q: She sounds like a very interesting young woman.

MORGAN: They're both interesting people. They really worked very hard to be honest with themselves about what their limitations are and what their capacities are.

Q: And where their strengths lie too, I'm sure.

MORGAN: It's fascinating. They always felt on duty when we were on post. They were always on duty as children of the American Ambassador in the Ivory Coast there were some things they just couldn't do. It would have caused a bad feeling or a bad effect on somebody or other.

Q: Did they accept those limitations?

MORGAN: Yes, they did. Maybe they hadn't been exposed enough to the rebellion of American youth that came in the '60s. There was enough rebellion in their schools. I guess its perhaps their upbringing. We felt that if you are children overseas, you are representing our country whether you like it or not and if you are doing it, you might as well do it as best that you can. Pursue excellence in whatever you do and this doesn't mean being a stuffed

shirt, but its means simply knowing something about your country and sharing it. Trying to make people understand a little better. Trying to help people be a little happier about individual Americans when they're cross with the United States. Just building bridges of understanding. This is what I think they've done very well. And they get absolutely pukey when they get this compliment, which I'm sure you've received, I've received it, “you're so nice” or “you're so cultivated” or “you're so well-informed, you can't possibly be American”.

Q: “Oh, I thought you were Canadian.” I've had that several times.

MORGAN: Well, I've had that very often, but I think this is a marvelous opportunity to simply say, “well, you see, that's how little you know about our country”. Put it that way. That got me started on reading their text material when we were in Abidjan. I sent to Japan and asked Mrs. Takaki for some text books that had been translated into English seeing what Japanese children learned about the United States. I got some from France, got some that were used in Africa, the French version for Africa and then I got some in German and began, I'm very bad at languages, but I puzzled my way through the European language stuff, to see what they were learning about America in schools at various levels. It isn't always very accurate. If exchange students and teachers and professors come to the United States and talk learnedly about the 'Last of the Mohicans', its because this is what they've learned.

Q: Hardly up-to-date.

MORGAN: Well, I've taken a vast amount of your time.

Q: I could sit here and listen much longer but I do feel that...

MORGAN: What time is it?

Q: It's ten of six.

MORGAN: Just three points I'd quickly like to make.

Q: Yes, don't hurry for me. I'm worried about your getting fatigued really.

MORGAN: One point, I think its very important for Foreign Service wives to have a sense of responsibility about serving the United States of America. I think that its very important that they should be given greater assistance in doing so. But I've had at my own dinner table, I've listened to American wives talking to non-American men, usually officers of the government in which we're posted, who haven't known anything about their own country. They haven't known how many people live in the United States. They don't know ethnic breakdowns. They haven't traveled enough in the United States to know anything about the country really. It's useful before you go to a post to bone up on your own country. None of us can know everything, but we can know where to go for information. And when somebody says what do you think of Philip Johnson's work, you know at least that they're talking about architecture and not a game of baseball somewhere, though there may be a Philip Johnson who plays baseball. You know who you're talking about. I think being a Foreign Service wife can be a glorious piece of adult education if you want to make it so, a very enriching aspect of life.

I think its important also when thinking with people outside your own culture to learn how to listen and not tell them that we do that better. This is something you can help them learn for themselves by suggesting, “I'm so glad you're interested in that, perhaps this, that I just happen to have, or this book I know I could get for you if you'd like to read it, might enlarge your understanding of this particular problem, you might be interested in it.”

I've heard people say, well, we had a distinguished African artist at dinner one night, we'd just bought from him a beautiful head that he'd made to hang over the entrance of the living room, and somebody turned to him and said “Did you do that?”

“Oui.” He understood English but he would never speak it, he always spoke French.

And the girl said, “Well, I've seen better things than that done in kindergarten in the United States.”

He called me over to translate what she'd said. I turned to her and said quickly, “I'm not going to say what you said if you'll forgive me.” I said, “We have in the United States a training program for children in kindergarten in art. It's too bad that they couldn't see this, what you've done.” And so he smiled. He felt the pejorative tone. He smiled. I took her aside and said, “I hope I haven't embarrassed you, but he is a very distinguished artist and some people think what he has done is very exciting. So, forgive me.” And she didn't speak to me. She was in trouble.

Q: And she shouldn't have been. I think you really bailed her out.

MORGAN: No, I mean that she was insulted because she didn't want to be treated that way. Which is the third point, that one can have various kinds of feelings, but you always have to be sensitive and aware of other people's feelings. If you take those into account before you blurt out what comes most readily to tongue, sometimes you save a friendship, or you save a friend for the United States, or you at least save yourself from sounding chauvinistic. We don't like male chauvinism as women, and most foreigners don't like any kind of American chauvinism. So that's the end.

Q: I have one question to ask you. What message do you have for the young women today that feel that they have to have their career, that they have to have the two incomes, that they aren't content to go as, I won't say they're not content to go as a Foreign Service wife, many of them say, “Oh, I'll give it a try. I'll give it a few years.” Now you, you've done all this. You were light years before your time, really, and you managed.

MORGAN: Well, first of all...

Q: You gave up a career.

MORGAN: I've done my whole life backwards. I became a mother when most people were becoming grandmothers. I gave up, I didn't give up, I simply changed. For my whole life has been a career. The only thing is I haven't been paid for a lot things that I've done. In the end when you sum up, I'm seventy-two now, which I don't feel seventy-two, I feel like a young student in a way because there are lots of things I want to learn. But I feel that if you look on life as a privilege, not a right, if you look on every experience as an opportunity, not a rejection, then even rejections become opportunities. I found some of the condescension that people express verbally or non-verbally to a wife in this country so horrific that now if somebody says, “what do you do?”, I say, “I lead a very full, demanding, stimulating life. And what do you do?” And then they start grumbling about their jobs and how its all very difficult and I say, “Sure, sure it is, but we all have different difficult aspects of life.”

I find that if a woman has difficulty coping with the fact that she doesn't have a job, this happened down in Florida, I'm self-employed, that's all I need to say, I work from home. And I am self-employed. I'm trying to write a couple of books. I'm trying to write some articles, I'm working as a volunteer on something called the Council of Diplomats of the Florida International Alliance trying to get people in Florida, retirees, helping as much as possible, on learning more in how we can help people understand foreign affairs, how we can improve the educational system, how we can improve business understanding for marketing purposes abroad. Thousands of things. We're working with the state legislature, we're working with the government of the state, and we're working with as many private institutions as possible. I am self-employed and I'm extremely busy, plus the fact that my husband and I do everything ourselves, all our own work.

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BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Spouse: George A. Morgan

Library of Congress

Entered Service: 1951Left Service: 1969Spouse entered Service: 1947

Posts: 1951Berlin, Germany 1954-58Tokyo, Japan 1965/69Abidjan, Ivory Coast Washington, D.C. assignments in intervening years

Status: Spouse of Retired AEP, Director of FSI

Date / place of birth: Victoria, British Columbia, 1914

Maiden Name: Carter

Schools: University of Arizona, 1933

Date/place of marriage:Berlin, 1951

Children: 2 daughters

Anne

Gael

Profession:

Chief, Public Liaison Division, Department of State 1945/51

FS Spouse

Special Assistant on Trade Policy at the White House 1961-64 (Paid)

Honors:

Department of State Superior Service Award (Public Liaison)

Note: In 1969 the Morgans retired to Vienna, Austria, where Mrs. Morgan taught English in the American International School and was a member of the Fulbright Commission. From 1979-88 she lived in Florida where she was vice chair of the Council of Diplomats of the Florida International Alliance. She was a student activist at U. of Arizona.

End of interview